same fashion the exchange in Godhra in Panch Mahals District of Gujarat has become very old. It has been working since 1952 and a new exchange was planned by the Telephone Department, but for the last so many years we do not find any progress. With a view to satisfy the requirements of the people in Gujarat they have just replaced the 1,000 C-DoT exchnage and provided telephone connections, but the waiting list of Gujarat State has mounted to 2,41,000 odd. In the same manner, Kerala is also having a very big waiting list. Karnataka is having around 2 lakhs. May I know from the Minister, when they are considering leasing of exchanges to private parties, in what fashion they are going to meet the particular demands of the people of these States?

SHRI SUKH RAM: Madam, as I stated earlier, our policy is to replace all the electro-mechanical exchanges with electronic exchanges. But the question is about its financial implications because we need about Rs. 1,500 crores to Rs. 2,000 crores for their replacements. So, in course of time, as and when we get the financial support we will achieve this objective. But as far as his question of leasing is concerned, there are proposal's and they are under consideration of the Government. As I stated earlier, when a decision is taken by the Cabinet we will definitely let him know about it. There is a long waiting list everywhere, in everytown. There are more than 3 million people on the waiting list. Now our attempt during the Eighth Five Year Plan is that the people should not wait for more than 2 years in cities and we will make the telephone available on demand as far as the rural areas are concerned. Then there is the financial problem. During the Eighth Five Year Plan for installation of about 75 lakh telephone lines in this country we need more than Rs. 40,000 crores, against which an allocation of Rs. 25,000 crores has been made. There is a substantial shortfall. We feel that we have to go in a big way. On the one hand we are losing revenue and, on the other hand, our economic growth is affected. Now there is a question if we should attract resources from the private sector also so that they can suppplement the efforts of the DoT and MTNL. I think this whole issue is under the consideration of the Government and as and when a decision is taken, some additional resources will be generated and we can get some money from other sources also. We are trying our level best. There are some constraints.

Telecasting Rights for Hero Cup Tournament

*62. SHRI MOHD. KHALEELUR RAHMAN:†

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Cricket Association of Bengal sold

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Mohd. Khaleelur Rahman.

the rights of telecasting the Hero Cup Tournament to Trans World International at the cost of national interests by ignoring Doordarshan; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Cricket Club of India defied the Calcutta High Court's Judgment which accorded a status of host-broadcaster to Doordarshan and did not provide it any telecasting facility at Bombay and other places?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. Camera positions sought by Doordarshan were denied to it at Bombay by the CCI while at other centres entry into the ground was permitted very late by the organisers and after the best camera positions were taken by TWI.

श्री मोहम्मद खलीलुर रहमान : मैडम, यह तो आप जानती ही हैं कि क्रिकेट हिन्दुस्तान का पसंदीदा खेल है। हिन्दुस्तान क्रिकेट टीम दुनिया की किसी भी क्रिकेट टीम के मुकाबले में कमतर नहीं है। उसने 1982 में वर्ल्ड कप जीता था और अन्दरुन मुल्क व बैरुने मुल्क कई टैस्ट सीरीज जीते हैं। हिन्दुस्तान में जितने शाइकीने क्रिकेट मैदान में खेल देखते हैं और टी.वी और रेडियों पर कामेन्टरी सुनते हैं, दुनिया के किसी मुल्क में इतनी बड़ी तादात नहीं होती मगर अफसोस हैं कि गुजिश्ता महीने यानी नवम्बर में क्रिकेट एसोसिएशन आफ बंगाल की डायमण्ड जुबली के सिलसिले में हिन्दुस्तान में जो पांच नेशन्स हीरो कप क्रिकेट टर्नामेन्ट हुआ था, उसके इबतदाई कई दिलचस्प मुकाबलों को टेली कास्ट न करके शायकीने क्रिकेट को मायूस कर दिया गया। सुना गया है कि क्रिकेट एसोसिएशन आफ बंगाल ने इस हीरो कप टूर्नामेन्ट के टेलीकास्ट के तमाम हकूक.... (**व्यवधान**)।

†[اردو محمد خلیل الرحمٰن :

معلوم یہ تو آپ جانتی ہیں کہ کرکٹ ہندوستان کا پسندیدہ کھیل ہے - ہندوستانی کرکٹ ٹیم دنیا کی کسی بھی ٹیم کے مقابلے میں کمتر نہیں ہے - اس نے ۱۹۸۲ میں ورلڈ کپ جیتا تھا اور اندرون ملک و بیرون ملک کئی سیریز جیتے ہیں - ہندوستان میں جتنے شائقین کرکٹ میدان میں کھیل دیکھتے ہیں اور ٹی - وی - اور ریڈیو پر کمنٹری سنتے ہیں دنیا کے کسی ملک میں اتنی بڑی تعداد نہیں ہوتی - مگر افسوس ہے کہ گزشتہ مہینے یعنی نومبر میں کرکٹ ایسوسی ایشن آف بنگال کی ڈائمنڈ جوبلی کے سلسلے میں ہندوستان میں جو پانچ نیشنس ہیرو کپ ٹورنامنٹ ہوا تھا اسکے ابتدائی اکثر دلچسپ مقابلوں کو ٹیلی کاسٹ نہ کرکے شائقین کرکٹ کو مایوس کر دیا گیا تھا - سنا گیا ہے کہ کرکٹ ایسوسی ایشن آف بنگال نے اس ہیرو کپ ٹورنامنٹ کے ٹیلی کاسٹ کے تمام حقوق .. (مداخلت).

उपसभापति : यह तो आपका सवाल है। आप इसको दोहराइए मत। आपका जो सप्लीमेंटरी है, उसी को दोहराइये।

श्री मोहम्मद खलीलुर रहमान : यह पहली दफा नहीं है। अभी हाल में श्री लंका और भारत की क्रिकेट सीरीज जो श्रीलंका में हुई थी उस वक्त भी इस किस्म के तनाजे ने दूरदर्शन को नजरअंदाज किया था। जिससे कोई भी मैच हिन्दुस्तान के शाइकीने क्रिकेट नहीं देख सके। सुना गया है कि इस

[] Transliteration in Arabic Script.

सिलसिले में यहां क्रिकेट एसोसिएशन आफ बंगाल का रवैया काबिले तनकीद है, वहीं मिनिस्ट्री आफ इन्फर्मेशन एण्ड ब्राडकास्टिंग का रवैया भी गैर-लचकदार और गैर-मफाहमाना रहा है । और बजाये इसके कि इस मसले को क्रिकेट के खेल और शाइकीने क्रिकेट के मफाद में हल किया जाता मिनिस्ट्री आफ इन्फर्मेशन एण्ड ब्राडकास्टिंग और क्रिकेट एसोसिएशन आफ बंगाल ने इसे एक प्रिस्टिज इश्यू बना लिया जिससे शाइकीने क्रिकेट और टुर्नामेन्ट दोनों के मफादात को बालाये ताक रख दिया गया। मैं आनरेबल मिनिस्टर से यह जानना चाहूंगा कि हीरो कप टुर्नामेन्ट के आगाज से कितने दिन कब्ल क्रिकेट एसोसिएशन आफ बंगाल की टुर्नामेन्ट के टेलीकास्ट के लिये मिनिस्ट्री से अप्रोच हुई थी और वह क्या वजह थी जिसकी बुनियाद पर दोनों में समझौता, नहीं हुआ।

मेरा बी पार्ट यह है कि . . .

†[شری محمد خلیل الرحمن :

یہ پہلی دفعہ نہیں ہے - ابھی حال میں شری لنکا اور پاکستان کی کرکٹ سیریز جو شری لنکا میں ہوئی تھی اسوقت بھی اس قسم کے تنازعہ نے دور درشن کو نظر انداز کیا تھا جس سے کوئی بھی صحیح ہندوستان کے شائقین کرکٹ نہیں دیکھ سکے - سنا گیا ہے کہ اس سلسلہ میں یہاں "کرکٹ ایسو سی ایشن آف بنگال" کا رویہ قابل تنقید ہے وہیں منسٹری آف انفارمیشن اینڈ براڈ کاسٹنگ کا رویہ بھی غیر لچکدار اور غیر مفاہمانہ رہا ہے اور بجائے اسکے کہ اس مسئلہ کو کرکٹ کے کھیل اور شائقین کرکٹ کے مفاد میں حل کیا جاتا "منسٹری آف انفارمیشن اینڈ براڈ کاسٹنگ" اور "کرکٹ ایسو سی ایشن آف بنگال" نے اسے ایک پرسٹیج ایشو بنا لیا جس سے شائقین کرکٹ اور ٹورنامنٹ دونوں کے مفادات کو بالائے طاق رکھدیا گیا - آنریبل منسٹر سے یہ جاننا چاہونگا کہ "ہیرو کپ ٹورنامنٹ" کے آغاز سے کتنے دن قبل "کرکٹ ایسو سی ایشن آف بنگال" کی ٹورنامنٹ کی ٹیلی کاسٹ کیلئے منسٹری سے اپروچ ہوئی تھی اور وہ کیا وجہ تھی جسکی بنیاد پر دونوں میں سمجھوتا نہیں ہوا - میرا بی - پارٹ یہ ہے کہ]

उपसभापति : पहले इसका जवाब देने दीजिये ।

श्री मोहम्मद खलीलुर रहमान : बी पार्ट मेरा यह है कि क्या यह सच है कि मिनिस्ट्री और बोर्ड के जिम्मेदारों में गलतफहमी की वजह से और आपसी रकाबत की वजह से दूरदर्शन और क्रिकेट एसोसियेशन आफ बंगाल में मआहिदा नहीं हो सका और एसोसियेशन को मजबूरन टेलीकास्ट के हकूक ट्रांसबर्ड इंटरनेशल को देना पड़ा ?

†[شری محمد خلیل الرحمن :

بی - پارٹ میرا یہ ہے کہ کیا یہ سچ ہے کہ منسٹری اور بورڈ کے ذمہ داروں میں غلط فہمی کی وجہ سے اور آپسی رقابت کی وجہ سے دور درشن اور کرکٹ ایسو سی ایشن آف بنگال میں معاہدہ نہیں ہو سکا اور ایسو سی ایشن کو مجبوراً ٹیلی کاسٹ کے حقوق ٹرانس ورلڈ **نٹر نیشنل** کو دینا پڑا -]

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: Madam, his first question is: When was the Ministry approached? Madam, the Ministry was not approached. Doordarshan authorities were first approached on the 15th

†[]Transliteration in Arabic Script.

March, 1993 by the Cricket Association of Bengal. There has never been any dialogue between the Board i.e. the Board of Control for Cricket in India and the Ministry till now.

श्री मोहम्मद खलीलुर रहमान : मेरा पूरा जवाब नहीं आया।

†[ڈاکٹر محمد خلیل الرحمن :
میرا پورا جواب نہیں آیا -]

उपसभापति : उन्होंने यह कहा है कि अप्रोच नहीं किया ...(**व्यवधान**) ...आपने क्रिकेट की तारीफ की, उसका वह क्या जवाब दें। वह तो मान रहे हैं।

श्री मोहम्मद खलीलुर रहमान : मेरा बी पार्ट था कि क्या यह सच है कि मिनिस्ट्री और बोर्ड के जिम्मेदारों की गलतफहमी और आपसी रकाबत की वजह से दूरदर्शन और क्रिकेट एसोसियेशन आफ बंगाल में मआहिदा नहीं हो सका था और एसोसियेशन को मजबूरन टेलीकास्ट के हकूक ट्रांसवर्ल्ड इंटरनेशनल को देने पड़ें। इसके ताल्लुक से मंत्री जी ने कुछ नहीं कहा।

†[ڈاکٹر محمد خلیل الرحمن :
میرا بی - پارٹ تھا کہ کیا یہ سچ ہے کہ مفسٹری اور بورڈ کے ذمہ داروں کی غلط فہمی اور آپسی رقابت کی وجہ سے دور درشن اور کرکٹ ایسو سی ایشن آف بنگال میں معاہدہ نہیں ہو سکا تھا اور ایسو سی ایشن کو مجبوراً ٹیلی کاسٹ کے حقوق ٹرانس ورلڈ انٹر نیشنل کو دینے پڑے - اسکے تعلق سے منسٹری جی نے کچھ نہیں کہا -]

सभापति : उन्होंने कहा है कि अप्रोच ही नहीं किया तो रकाबत कहां से होगी ?

†[]Transliteration in Arabic Script.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: Madam, as far as prestige is concerned, it is a fact that there is facility in this country, there is competency in this country. The National Broadcasting Corporation or the organisation know as Doordarshan has, with great credibility and with great finesse, conducted the 1982 Asian Games, 1983 NAM, 1983 CHOGM and 1987 World Cup Cricket and it was lauded by foreign television companies like the British Broadcasting Corporation, which has been regarded as the Bhagwad Gita. We keep on quoting the BBC at every instance. Inspite of that, when an attempt was sought to be made to give the host broadcasting status to a foreign multinational company, it hurt the national pride. Therefore, when Doordarshan was left out, it decided not to get into this fracas because it has hurt the national pride. It was not the prestige of Doordarshan because Doordarshan is a very small part of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and it is a service organisation apart from a commercial organisation. The Board of Control for Cricket in India has never approached the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. This happened between the Doordarshan authorities and the Cricket Association of Bengal. Madam, if you want all the details, it will take me at least half-an-hour to give the chronology of events. If you want, we can have a discussion. Due to the shifting stands of the Cricket Association of Bengal who kept on changing their stands, Doordarshan had to keep on giving them alternative proposals. It was the court which ordered the Government of India's various Ministries and Doordarshan to telecast in the national interest and this is the perception of Doordarshan. We did telecast the matches although very unfavourable conditions were given to us, that is, to Doordarshan. In spite of the impediments and obstacles, Doordarshan stuck to its job manfully and did a competent job.

उपसभापति : आपकी सेकेंड सप्लीमेंटरी हो गया।

श्री मोहम्मद खलीलुर रहमान : सेकेंड सप्लीमेंटरी नहीं हुआ। यह तो मैं अपने पहले सप्लीमेंटरी का क्लेरीफिकेशन पूछ रहा था।

†[شری محمد خلیل الرحمن :

سیکنڈ سپلیمنٹری نہیں ہوا - یہ تو میں اپنے پہلے سپلیمنٹری کا کلیری فیکیشن پوچھ رہا تھا -]

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You just asked your second supplementary.

मोहम्मद खलीलुर रहमान साहब अगर आप एक सप्लीमेंटरी के अन्दर चार पांच पार्ट करेंगे तो यही हश्र होने वाला है। (व्यवधान) एक एक कर के पूछ सकते हैं (व्यवधान) I am not denying the question to you. But other Members are also keen to ask and they should also have a chance to ask. I have got many names here.

श्री मोहम्मद खलीलुर रहमान : आनरेबल मिनिस्टर साहब ने अपने जवाब में यह कहा कि मिनिस्टरी आफ इनफॉरमेशन एंड ब्राडकास्टिंग को एप्रोच नहीं किया। मैं आनरेबल मिनिस्टर साहब से यह जानना चाहूंगा कि क्या दूरदर्शन और मिनिस्टरी की यह जिम्मेदारी नहीं थी कमर्शियल की हैसियत से कंट्रेक्ट हासिल करने के लिए वह खुद पहल करते ?

†[شری محمد خلیل الرحمن :

آنریبل منسٹر صاحب نے اپنے جواب میں یہ کہا کہ منسٹری آف انفارمیشن اینڈ براڈ کاسٹنگ کو اپروچ نہیں کیا - میں آنریبل منسٹر صاحب سے یہ پوچھنا چاہتا ہوں کہ کیا دور درشن اور منسٹری کی یہ ذمہ داری نہیں تھی کمرشیل کی حیثیت سے کہ کنٹریکٹ حاصل کرنے کیلئے وہ خود پہل کرتے -]

†[ ] Transliteration in Arabic Script.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: That is a matter of opinion, individual opinion. Doordarshan has functional autonomy and the Government of India does not jump into any tangle where there is a provincial sports association dealing with Doordarshan. Tomorrow, maybe a gulidanda association from my constituency may say it and that does not mean that as a MP from the area I would also jump in and involve the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting into that controversy.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: But you must support indigenous games.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: The hon. Minister has rightly said that the Cricket Association, the NCCI, has hurt our national pride and our national sentiment. The question is, when you feel that our national pride has been hurt—not only that, you said in your answer, 'yes', 'the Cricket Club of India defied the Calcutta High Court judgement...', they defied and if that is the position and you have said 'yes' to my question—then, would you get them prosecuted under the Contempt Act because that is very vital? The question is of national pride. I am not on Doordarshan or the Ministry. These are subsidiary issues. The question is: In Indian if they are playing cricket and the High Court decides that we should be given the status of a host country, even then we are put in some corner, if this is the way, if this is the shabby manner the Cricket Association is going to honour our national pride, then why should we not prosecute them for contempt of court? This is my question. Why not?

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: It is for the court to decide and not for the Minister.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him answer. Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta, you may put it in your supplementary.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: With reference to the hon. Member's question, I feel certain misgivings have been raised regarding the flouting of the High Court orders by Doordarshan by not telecasting matches played in Bombay in spite of the Courts decision. This has been very lucidly mentioned by the hon. Member Mr. Mehta. The High Court has been moved by Doordarshan through a contempt petition in view of the failure of the CAB to comply with the directions of the High Court. No final hearing of this petition has taken place. Meanwhile, a writ petition has also been filed in the Supreme Court by the CAB against the Union of India regarding non-compliance of High Court and Supreme Court orders by Doordarshan. The case is pending and if you see the report, an officer of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting who has been trying to follow up the case of Doordarshan in the High Court has also been served with a contempt notice.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, I understand very much the Minister's concern that the national pride is being hurt. But there is also a feeling in the country that the interest of cricket has also been hurt. The interest of cricket has also been hurt by Doordarshan—if not deliberately, in what way only they can explain—by dilly-dallying the decision on telecasting. The point is, the cricket lovers expected Doordarshan to cooperate. The cricket lovers never expected Doordarshan to enter into a tussle and the Ministry to sort out the issue. We are not interested to know about the relationship that exists between the Minister, the Ministry and the Doordarshan. But the point is, when it was known to everybody that such an important cricket event was taking place in the country, it was all the more essential for Doordarshan as well as the Ministry to make a smooth and quick decision. This was not done. Therefore, I feel that the interest of cricket has also been hurt. My supplementary is, Madam, the hon. Minister of Finance is here. The country is speaking of globalisation; the country is speaking of opening up....

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You put your question not to the Finance Minister but to the Doordarshan Minister.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: It is a Government entity. The Minister of Finance cannot move in one way and the minister of Information cannot move in the revese direction. It is a single Government we are having in the country. Therefore my questions are: (a) When the environment of Government policy is globalisation, what prevented the Government and also the Doordarshan from ensuring a liaison with the foreign firm and having it sorted out? (b) Is it true that the crew of the international telecasting company was manhandled, that their things were not allowed to be brought into the country and that their performance was also interfered with? I put this question because we don't have a special law for them. I would like to know if the law will take its own course or it will be interfered with.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: Madam, may I take a little time on this? He has raised....

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If there is to be a very long discussion on it, I think I can allow Half-an-Hour Discussion (*Interruptions*)

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Let him give a short answer.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If he is going to take a long time.. (*Interruptions*) Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta, there are other questions also listed. I will allow a Half-an-Hour Discussion... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, it is an important thing.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is why he said, he is going to take a long time.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: When serious charges have been levelled against Doordarshan and the Government of India, should I just sit down and take such charges? Madam, I will make it as brief as possible.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You give a brief answer and then we can have a Half-an-Hour Discussion.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: First of all, Madam, the interset of cricket is very much in the hearts of Doordarshan and the Government of India and it is only because of this interest of cricket that the Doordarshan offered only Rs. 5 lakhs as technical fees whereas the operational cost of telecasting came up to Rs. 11.9 lakhs. So, Doordarshan was seeking to give Rs. 5 lakhs, in fact Rs. 6 lakhs as a concession, in the interest of cricket. But Doordarshan was never given an opportunity. While Doordarshan was negotiating with the CAB about the purchase of T.V. rights from them, it learnt that the Cricket Association of Bengal had entered into a contract with the World Production Establishment (WPE) through its designate, Trans-World International a multi-national on the 14th June, 1993, granting WPE and its affiliate the sole exclusive copyright of the telecast of the tournament "throughout the territory of India" while CAB retained the radio rights. Why did Doordarshan not want to take that? Mr. Das Gupta said, 'Let us not take a legalistic view or enter into an argument. There is dilly-dallying on the part of Doordarshan." There has never been any dilly-dallying. On the contrary, for four months, from June to October, CAB did not respond to the queries raised by Doordarshan. Suddenly, on 18 October, they woke up and all hell broke loose. Now, instead of taking a legalistic view of the entire thing and for a smooth and quick decision which Mr. Das Gupta wants, I would only like to quote from the Constitution, from the Allocation of Business Rules because I am responsible to Parliament and I cannot take an illegal stand or unconstitutional stand. I quote:

"Sovereign power is that which is absolute and uncontrolled within its own sphere."

I quote it from AIR Constitution of India—Volume-I by VV Chitale and Nathu Rao. Now, if you want from DD Basu also, I will quote from that... (*Interruptions*)... I have already asked you to kindly bear with me because I have to give an adequate response. I again quote:

"Sovereign or supreme power is that which is absolute and uncontrolled within its sphere."

This is from DD Basu's Constitution of India, page 67 wherein the allocation of business rules given to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is illustrated... (*Interruptions*)...

उपसभापति: मुझे लगता है मंत्री जी, यह काफी लंबी कंट्रोवर्सी है, इसलिए इस पर हॉफ एन ऑवर दे देंगे। इसमें मेरे पास काफी सवाल हैं, बहुत सवाल हैं।... (व्यवधान)

I never knew that he was going to take so much time.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: coming to this, I will g[illegible] tion of 'host broa[illegible]ni- tion of 'host [illegible]nunciat-

ed by the Asian-Pacific Broadcasting Union, of which India is a Member, is as follows:

"Host broadcaster is an entity responsible for providing the rights-holder with the international radio and television signals producing the related video and audio equipment at the venue and transporting them to a central tower".

"Transporting them to the venue for the international broadcast and subsequent distribution", is the operative part because as far as creating signals is concerned, there is nothing wrong. But it is only transmitting and uplinking which are illegal. No country in the world allows this. Even the UK, Japan, which is a free enterprise country, a competitive country and the USA do not allow such things. Uplinking and other regulations are there everywhere.

Allocation of Business Rules is, "all business connected with the All India Radio embracing news services, home programmes, etc., development of broadcasting throughout the Union of India, installation and maintenance of radio stations transmitters, development of television throughout the Union of India including installation, maintenance and operation of television programmes, production centres, specialised television services, promotion and production of television programmes". All these fall within the purview of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Then comes the Telegraph Act, 1885 which the Parliament in its wisdom has not amended even though the Indian Penal Code which is very archaic, i.e. an Act of 1872, was amended in 1972. Section 4(1) of the Indian Telegraph Act says... (*Interruption*) ...

DR. NAUNIHAL SINGH: There should be a straight answer. The whole history is not necessary to be given at this moment. The time of the House is being wasted.

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: I agree with the hon. Member that the time of the House should not be wasted. But I have to say that it is the exclusive and sovereign right of the Government of India to transmit and telecast. It may give permission to anybody to do that. But it has to be done with a licence or with permission from the Government as it happens in every other country. But it is with a licence and with permission as it happens in every country. Now, the TWI did not have the permission. It only had some conditional permission to bring in equipment. Without permission from the competent authority it was seeking to telecast by setting up a direct link without the Videsh Nigam Ltd. and that is what the Doordarshan was trying to bring to the notice of the Court because our sovereignty was being affected and compromised. Doordarshan did not want to take action. Instead of supporting and lauding it by saying, "Here is a small Department of the Government of India which was trying to maintain the sovereignty", Doordarshan is being castigated in this House. This is rather unfortunate and this is a very vital question and the Parliament should exercise its sovereignty... (*Interruptions*) ...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: In that case, why were they not hauled up?... (*Interruptions*) ... Why were thty not hauled up?... (*Interruptions*) ...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta, please sit down... (*Interruptions*) ...

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: An unconstitutional and illegal act was to be foisted on us and the Doordarshan was asked to deal with a foreign multinational for whom they are campaigning... (*Interruptions*) ...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: No, no... (*Interruptions*)... If they have violated the law, why have they not been hauled up?... (*Interruptions*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta, please sit down. This is not the Zero Hour. I will not permit it and I am not permitting it... (*Interruptions*)... I am not permitting it. I would suggest that if the Members are not satisfied, I can allow an Half-an-hour Discussion on this. But I am not allowing any more time on this question... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: Kindly allow an Half-an-hour Discussion on this.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You give it in writing and I will permit it.

श्री वीरेन जे0 शाह : मैडम, आपकी नजरे इनायत कीजिए।

उपसभापति : आप हाफ एन अवर में बोल लीजिए।

Next Question. Question No. 63.

Strike by Employees of Rural Banks

†*63. SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH.
SHRI MOHINDER SINGH LATHER:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of existing rural banks along with staff, state-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that thousands of rural bank employees went on strike for a day;

(c) if so, what are the issues involved leading to their strike;

(d) whether Government have made any negotiations with them to resolve the issues and to run the banks smoothly; and

(e) if so, what are the details thereof stating the present position with regard to the grievances of the rural banks employees?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED): (a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) At present there are 196 Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) with a network of 14,543 branches in the country. The number of RRBs alongwith staff, State-wise, is given at Annexure. (*See* below).

(b) The RRB employees observed 1 day's token strike on two occasions i.e. on 24.8.93 and 2.9.93.

(c) The demands made during their strikes include, inter-alia, the following:—

(i) Early constitution of National Rural Bank (NRB)

(ii) Payment of arrears

(iii) Immediate wage revision

(iv) Pension in addition to CPF and Gratuity

(v) Halt to the move of Government for privatisation of Banks, Insurance Companies and other financial institutions

(vi) Bonus for all

(d) and (e) Government initiated a process of consultation for restructuring of Regional Rural Banks (RRBs). A number of alternative models have been considered in consultation with National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)/Reserve Bank of India (RBI). Finance Minister also held a meeting on 7.10.1993 in New Delhi

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Digvijay Singh.